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SUBJECT: TERRORISM TRIALS UPDATE

REF: A. TD-314/52765-0

[B](#). AMMAN 7438

[C](#). AMMAN 8717

[D](#). AMMAN 6237

[E](#). AMMAN 4487

[F](#). AMMAN 9392

[1](#). (U) SUMMARY: Jordan's State Security Court began proceedings in four separate cases against groups charged with planning to use cyanide to kill bar owners and patrons, illegally entering Syria to attack U.S. forces in Iraq, and plotting to attack U.S. personnel in Jordan. The court said it would re-examine seven guilty verdicts issued against the "Millennium Plotters." Prosecutors called for the death penalty against those charged with planning chemical attacks in Amman in April 2004; further testimony was heard in the Jaghbir and Qteishat cases. END SUMMARY.

KHATTAB BRIGADE - CYANIDE PLOT

[2](#). (U) In mid-September, Jordanian security services arrested six men for plotting to use cyanide to kill bar owners and patrons in Jordan. According to the charge sheet, the defendants, who named themselves the "Khattab Brigade," also planned to attack Americans who frequented the Four Seasons Hotel in Amman, and the Intercontinental Hotel in Aqaba. The names of the defendants are as follows; ringleader Hamdi Ahmad Abdallah Ali, 23; Lu'ay Hisham Abd-al-Qadir al-Sharif, 25; Muhammad Hasan Uqlah al-Umari, 24; Muhammad Awdah Ali, 26; Usama Amin al-Shihabi, alias Abu-al-Zahra, a Palestinian fugitive; and Haytham Abd-al-Karim al-Sa'di, alias Abu-Tariq, another Palestinian fugitive. The prosecutor charged all the defendants with conspiring to carry out terrorist activities; no court date has been set.

Al-ASWAD CELL

[3](#). (U) On November 14, the State Security Court arraigned five men who were arrested in July and charged with plotting acts that would "harm Jordan's ties with foreign countries." The five defendants -- Iyad Ahmad al-Aswad; Anas Hasan Abu-Musamih; Ammar Muhammad al-Falluji; Qais Nur-al-Din Mir'I; and Hasan Muhammad al-Falluji -- pled not guilty to the charges. According to their indictment, the defendants, residents of Irbid, between 19 and 34 years of age, intended to travel to Iraq through Syria to attack U.S. forces. Ringleader Iyad Ahmad al-Aswad, 34, allegedly recruited the four other cell members and arranged their travel to Syria through a contact identified as "Basel Rammah," a Syrian apparently known for smuggling fighters into Iraq.

BORDER INFILTRATORS INDICTED

[4](#). (U) Prosecutors indicted 15 Jordanian suspects in late October on charges of infiltrating the border with Syria to join insurgents fighting against U.S. troops in Iraq. The suspects, five of whom are on the run, are accused of border infiltration, possession of an automatic weapon, and carrying out activities aimed at "undermining ties with a foreign nation." According to prosecutors, 10 of the men were arrested in July after they returned to Jordan from Syria, having failed to enter Iraq by illegal means. Some of the defendants met a man in Syria identified as "Abu Adam al-Tunisi," who was to help them enter Iraq. While in Syria, the group allegedly met with Saudi and Libyan militants who tried to persuade them to carry out suicide attacks in Iraq. The indictment did not say if the cell was linked to Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi; however, Abu Adam al-Tunisi, the Syria-based contact, has been identified in previous Jordanian trials as being a Zarqawi recruiter. A date for the trial has not been announced. If found guilty, the defendants could receive a 15 year prison sentence.

MA'ADH BREIZAT - JIPTC PLOT

[5](#). (SBU) In late November, the State Security Court arraigned

four men for plotting to attack U.S. personnel in Jordan (ref F.) According to the indictments, the four men, Ma'adh Breizat (19), Ibrahim al-Jahawsheh (28), Faisal al-Rweidhan (28), and Ibadah al-Hiyari (24), had trained with automatic rifles and had followed U.S. instructors who work at the Jordanian International Police Training Center (JIPTC) to a house near the U.S. Embassy in Amman in August. The four had also allegedly inspected a potential ambush site on a road used by U.S. personnel and other trainers driving to and from JIPTC (Ref A). Ringleader Ma'adh Breizat is additionally charged with possessing unlicensed firearms. No trial date has been set.

MILLENNIUM PLOT UPDATE

16. (U) On November 28, Jordan's military court said it would re-examine guilty verdicts it had issued against seven militants convicted of a bungled terror conspiracy to use poison gas against American and Israeli tourists during Jordan's millennium celebrations in December 1999. Military judges adjourned the hearing until an unspecified date after an appeals court ordered a retrial on grounds that the plotters may be covered under a general amnesty issued by King Abdullah. In 2000, the military court sentenced some of the 28 men involved in the plot with prison terms ranging from 7 1/2 years to life imprisonment, while sentencing others to death. The seven defendants, who pleaded innocent, claimed previously they had confessed under duress. The prosecution's indictment said the plotters had been collecting explosive material since 1996 from various Arab countries, including Syria and Iraq, and that many of the suspects had received military training in camps in Syria, Lebanon and Afghanistan.

PROSECUTOR CALLS FOR DEATH IN CHEMICAL ATTACK CASE

17. (U) On November 27, the state prosecutor demanded the death penalty for Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi and 11 other men accused of plotting a chemical bomb attack in Amman in April 2004. Four of the accused, including Zarqawi, are being tried in absentia. Zarqawi has already been sentenced to death by the State Security Court for the October 2002 murder of U.S. diplomat Laurence Foley in Amman. In addition to conspiracy to plot terrorist acts, the suspects are charged with membership in the outlawed "Al Tawheed Brigades," as well as possession and manufacture of explosives and weapons. In September and October of 2005, defense lawyers for the eight defendants called for testimony from expert witnesses and a former General Intelligence Directorate official to prove that the defendants did not possess harmful chemicals (Refs B and C).

JAGHBIR CLAIMS TORTURE

18. (U) The State Security court charged Muammar Ahmad Jaghbir on November 21 with plotting "subversive acts that led to the death of individuals" for the August 2003 attack against the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad that killed 17 and injured dozens. Jaghbir denied the charges, and claimed his confession was extracted under torture and duress. Jaghbir, who was arrested in Iraq in May 2004 by U.S. forces and eventually handed over to Jordanian authorities, is also standing trial in the Laurence Foley case (Refs D and E). According to the prosecutor, Jaghbir met Zarqawi in Iraq in 2002 and plotted to attack Jews and foreigners residing in Jordan, as well as Jordanian interests - including the Jordanian embassy - in Iraq. The indictment further alleged that Zarqawi, Jaghbir and Nidal Arabiat packed a car with explosives that was later driven into the Jordanian embassy by a man named Abu Ahmad.

QTEISHAT CELL TRIAL CONTINUES

19. (U) On November 16, relatives of four Jordanian men charged with plotting attacks against hotels, foreign tourists and General Intelligence Department (GID) officers in 2005, testified that they observed torture marks on the defendants' bodies. The prosecution alleges that the four men - Osama Abu-Hazim, 23; Hatem Ensour, 20; Mohammad Arabiyat, 24; and Yazan al-Haliq, 24, - received military training and explosives from Mohammad Rateb Qteishat, who is being tried in absentia and is believed to be in Iraq. The four men, arrested in February, claimed that they were beaten and forced to confess (Ref C).

HALE